(a) whether Government propose to introduce Caller identification facilities at all telephone exchanges in all major cities;

(b) by when Caller identification facilities would be available at all telephone exchanges throughout the country; and

(c) whether Government are considering any proposal to provide the facility free of charge to subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Caller Identification Facility is presently available from most of the telephone exchanges. However, in a few exchanges constituting about 2% of the total installed switching capacity, it is not possible to provide this facility due to technical constraints. The calling line identification facility would be available even from these exchanges, once the existing exchanges are replaced by the new technology exchanges. Private operators haved also started installation of exchanges in many places. Once their exchanges with this facility are available, this constraint will be removed. However, no time frame is possible at this stage.

(c) No Sir.

Telephone Connection in Fake Names

†455. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy loss is incurred by the telephone department due to releasing telephones in fake names at several places in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any step till now to investigate in the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Achievements of Telecom Revolution in Villages

456. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Private Firms, which are supposed to bring telecome revolution in rural areas, have achieved only 0.6% of the target;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what action is being initiated to ensure achievement of target at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per information, the Private Basic Telephone Service firms licensed in 1997-98 have provided 608 Village Public Telephones (VPTs) against a commitment to provide 97,806 VPTs in first three years of their licence agreement. Investment by private firms has primarily been made in the urban areas only.

(c) Private firms have consistently been persuaded and insisted upon to expedite provision of VPTs as per their voluntarily committed performance obligations. The Liquidated Damage (LD) charges have been recovered from them, as provided for in the licence agreement, for delay in fulfillment of the committed performance obligations in this respect. Further, they have also been asked to complete the unfulfilled committed roll out obligations by December, 2002 for which submission of additional Performance Bank Guarantees and Deed of Guarantees haved been demanded.

Modernisation of telecommunication network in Orissa

457. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that modernisation of telecommunication network in Orissa is lagging far behind the other States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the specific plan formulated for modernisation of Telecommunication network in the State during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(d) the steps taken to modernise telecommunication network in the State; and

(e) the funds earmarked for Bhubaneswar circle ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) No Sir.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.